

Dance Index



Birth of the Waltz

by Paul Nettl



Menuet de Strasbourg. Engraving from an almanach of 1682.

Dance Index

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Comment

Imperial Waltz! imported from the Rhine
(Famed for the growth of pedigree and wine),
Long be thine import from all duty free,
And hock itself be less esteemed than thee;
In some few qualities alike—for hock
Improves our cellar—*thou* our living stock.
The head to hock belongs—thy subtler art
Intoxicates alone the heedless heart:
Through the full veins thy gentler poison swims,
And wakes to wantonness the willing limbs.

One explanation of the wide popularity of the Waltz—its unashamed emotional appeal—is found in the above lines from Byron's "Apostrophic Hymn." In other stanzas the Waltz is hailed as "Endearing," "Seductive," "Voluptuous," and it would be difficult to find any human being impervious to such warm persuasion. Whether we dance ourselves, or watch others, or merely listen to the music, we become the willing victims of agreeable "free associations": beer-gardens—fashionable ballrooms—romantic intrigue—the laughter of happy couples whirling or gliding over every conceivable surface from hard-packed earth to highly polished floors. Even the modern, somnambulistic distortions have their nostalgic appeal, and by their very existence pay a clumsy tribute to the waltz.

Since dancing and making music are natural expressions among all peoples, and their manifestations differ so widely, it is inter-

esting to trace the life-line of a specific form, whose ancestry goes back farther, in an unbroken line, than that of any other dance known today. Undoubtedly the long life of the waltz is due, in part, to a rollicking, healthy childhood in the country. Though in later years it assumed a more restrained mien, in keeping with the manners of urban society by which it was adopted, it has retained an inherent vivacity throughout its several metamorphoses.

Dr. Paul Nettl, author of the following study, is Professor of Music History at Indiana University. He has published many articles on dancing and dance-music, with particular emphasis on their treatment in the 17th century, a most important period in the development of the waltz. In the short analysis he has written for this issue of *Dance Index*, his obvious delight in the necessary, careful research, has resulted in tempering the scholarly approach with a spirit as *gemütlich* as the waltz itself.

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M. E.

Cover: The Waltz. American lithograph. ca. 1847.

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Birth of the Waltz

by Paul Nettl

After the close of the first World War, when the Austrian State Archives, inaccessible during the Hapsburg reign, were opened to the public, scholars and historians in great numbers (myself among them), and from all parts of the world, rushed to the files. I pored over quantities of yellowed documents for months, searching for details on the theatre, music and dance as performed at the Hapsburg Court in the 17th century. Many interesting facts on the history of the dance came to light.

Music was widely cultivated in Vienna, and there was a great deal of dancing. The documents tell of "Masquerades," "Pastorals," "Peasant Weddings," *Wirtschaften* ("Inn Festivals," called *Hôteleries* by the French), *Königreiche* ("Kingdoms"), and *Landschäften* ("Counties," or "County Fairs"). While the fêtes of the Austrian Baroque are rooted in the culture of the court, they have singularly popular elements. In the "Pastorals" the guests appeared in shepherd costumes. In "Peasant Weddings" a pair was appointed as bride and bridegroom, another as the bridal parents; others were chosen as *Kranzel Maedchen* (Maids of Honor) and *Kranzel Bub* (Best Man); all the rest were invited peasant guests. In the *Königreiche* a pair was elected King and Queen, or prince and princess; others were ladies and gentlemen of the court, and servants—men and women, were drawn by lot. The *Wirtschaften* were the most favored of these entertainments. The French title *Hôteleries* was given them by a French Jesuit, Claude François Ménestrier, author of two important works on the dance. He was present at such a performance in Munich in 1670, and was so charmed with it that he called it "*une ma-*

nière la plus agréable et spirituelle du monde."

These entertainments were dance festivals at which the Emperor and Empress acted as host and hostess. Invitations, sent out by the Master of Ceremonies in the name of the Imperial hosts, designated the costumes (always national) in which the guests were to appear. The dresses thus decreed represented all countries; there were Spaniards, Dutch and Hungarian peasants, Italians, even Americans,—all designed in the somewhat theatrical manner of the famous theatre-architect Burnacini. Among the records of these archives I found one describing a *Wirtschaft* given to Peter the Great of Russia when he visited Vienna in 1698. Dressed as inn-keeper and hostess, their Majesties Leopold I. and his Empress welcomed the Czar at the entrance of the main hall, which had been converted into a garden. The Czar, with his partner, the lady-in-waiting *Fräulein von Thurn*, then led the other couples in the opening dance. Dancing continued until it was time for the banquet, which was laid out in the gallery at a great table set for eighty places; in the ante-chamber—reached by crossing the hall past the great spiral stair-case—there was another table seating forty persons. Their Majesties took their places in the gallery with the Czar and his lady beside them. The meal was served by thirty-two pages in costume, two of whom, familiar with the Czech language, were specially appointed to wait on the Czar. Following the custom, His Majesty, as inn-keeper, drank to the health of the Czar and the others present, and after the banquet everyone returned to the hall where dancing was resumed until day-break.



Court Dances. de Bry. ca. 1570.

On page 210 an illustration of this very *Wirtschaft* appears. The engraving by Merian of Frankfurt, appears in his work "Theatrum Europaeum," and shows the banquet table on the left side, the ballroom to the right. The music seems to be covered and hidden away in some corner which is unusual, for we often see an *estrade* in other representations of the period. The movements of the dancing couple in the middle of the hall plainly indicate the rural character of the dance.

The question arises now: what was danced at the *Wirtschaften* and other court festivities of the 17th century?

From numerous manuscripts containing music for the dances in favor at the Viennese court, we see that the composers were by no means the great Italians who furnished the church music—men like Bertali, Ziani, Cesti, Draghi, Caldara and others. No, they were simply native Viennese, whose chief function was to write ballet music for the intermezzi performed at the opera, and to invent new dances to be danced at the balls, *Wirtschaften* and other fêtes. These composers of popular dances included Wolfgang Ebner (1610-1665), organist under Ferdinand III, Johann Heinrich Schmelzer (1623-1680) and his son, Andreas Anton Schmelzer (1653-1701). They were followed by Johan Joseph Hoffer and the Italo-English violonist

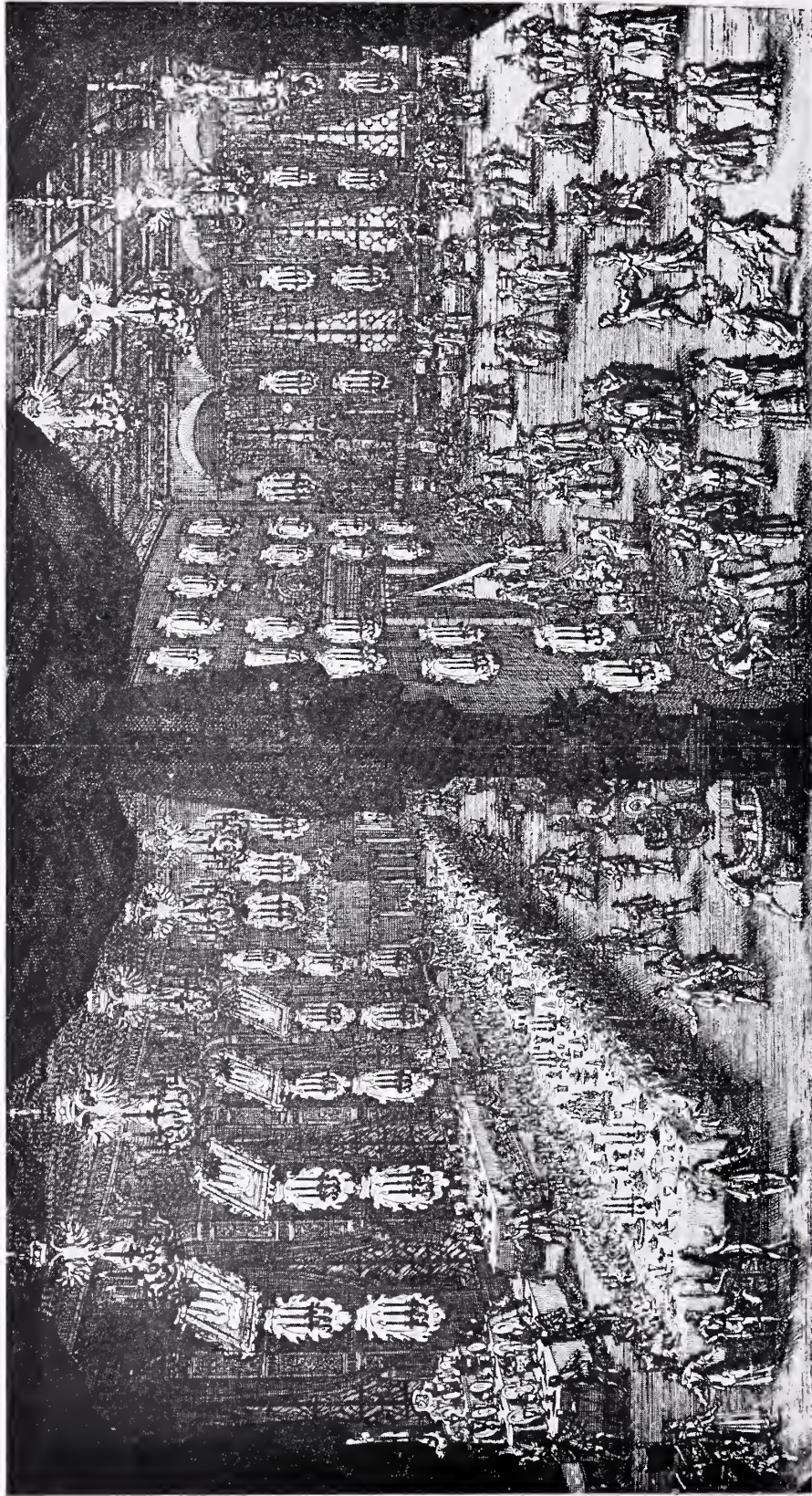
and ballet-composer imported from England, Nicolas Matteis. Of these men, Johann Heinrich Schmelzer is most deserving of our attention, and I shall have further occasion to speak of him.

The dances then in vogue were of the most varied order. The "Menuet" had been taken over from the French but was not executed in the classic manner of Versailles. It came to be a much livelier dance. Furthermore the *Gavotte*, *Allemande*, *Rigaudon*, *Passepied* and *Bouree* were adopted. The Italians contributed the *Gagliarde*, *Pavane* and *Saltarello*; from Spain came the *Chaconne*, *Sarabande* and *Folia*, and England furnished the "Jig" and *Moresca* (*Mauresque*). It is interesting to note that one of the *Moresche* that Schmelzer wrote for the ballets is almost note for note like an English "Morris."

We know that during the reign of Leopold I, Santo Ventura, then residing in Vienna, was *Maestro di Balletto*. Born in Venice in 1626, he was summoned to the Court of Vienna by Ferdinand II, and continued his activities under Ferdinand III and Leopold I. The documents speak of a new style of dancing invented by him in 1652. In 1678 he ceded his post to his son, Domenico Ventura. Santo Ventura was a pupil of Carlo Beccaria, who had been taught by Cesare Negri, the famous *Trombone*, whose works

Country Dances. de Bry. ca. 1570.





"Representation of the Wirttschaft performed 1698 in Vienna, in the presence of the Czar. It was followed by an elaborate banquet in the Imperial castle."

Nuove Invenzione di Balli (1604) and Grazie d'Amore (1602) are the classical social dance books of the late Italian Renaissance. Though dancing at the Austrian Court moved in the solemn, simple and dignified steps of the Italian school, the lighter French style was not unknown. We can, however, detect a feeling of envy and a dislike of the French ballet on the part of Leopold and his court. They looked askance at the growing fame of this form of French art. On one occasion, when Grenonville, the French ambassador, gave a performance of French ballet at his home, (Sept. 28, 1666) the Spanish ambassador sent a highly censorious account of it to Madrid, causing much comment. Leopold, who had also been present, expressed sharp disapproval at the spreading of such gossip and talk.

Leopold's biographer, Rink, reports that His Majesty was a good dancer, who never danced in the French manner, but followed the German *Führungen* as was consistent with the dignity of a crowned head.

In defining these German *Führungen* we must consider to what extent the native dances of Austria and Germany influenced the development of the elegant social dancing performed at court. There is undoubtedly a close connection between court-dancing and the Austrian folk-dances of that period. The Austrian and South-German folk-dance, which, according to Curt Sachs, is identical with the *Weller* and is but scantily treated in source-books, originated in the mountains and valleys of the Austrian Steiermark and Bavaria. The representations of the printer H. S. Beheim give us some idea of the dances. The French philosopher Montaigne also describes having seen such a dance in Augsburg, in 1580, at the home of Fugger. (*Journal de Voyage de Michel Montaigne*). The partners, each with his hands on the other's back, held one another so closely that their faces touched. Even today the *Ländler* is danced in this fashion in Austrian villages.

In pictures we sometimes see them stepping back to back, as in one of the figures of the "Virginia Reel" when they skip, with hands uplifted.

The master-singer Kunz Haas, of approximately the same period, complains: "Now they are dancing the godless *Weller* or *Spinner*, whatever they call it." While the word *Spinner* (from *spinnen* or *spintisieren*)—in colloquial language signifying "to be mad"—would point to a kind of *Folia* or Mad Dance, the *Weller*, as shown by Curt Sachs, is a sliding (*schleifend*) or gliding dance,—in other words: a waltz.

Of course this dance, originally danced by peasants, took on a more moderate form when introduced into higher society. The wild wide steps became shorter and more elegant, so that Hans Sachs, the great Minnesinger, can speak of that dance in his *Eigentliche Beschreibung aller Stände* ("True description of all the Classes"), as a "courtly dance, where in polite fashion each maiden clasps her lover and they dance with light steps so that mind and heart rejoice."

This seems to be the exact manner in which it was danced at the Austrian Court in the 17th century. The lady was conducted around the room to the tune of a two-beat measure, and when the music changed to the $\frac{3}{4}$ of the *Nach Tanz* (After Dance), the couple got into position for the *Weller* and waltzed around the hall.*

The melodies of these dances resemble the one recorded in manuscript 16583 of the Vienna State Library which was composed by Johann Heinrich Schmelzer from M. A. Costi's *Le Disgrazie d'Amore*. From the standpoint of music, this example proves conclusively the origin of the *Ländler* and the "Waltz." It denotes a dance that is paced

* The engraving of the *Wirtschaft* given for Peter the Great shows a couple dancing the *Weller* in gliding steps.

and waltzed, the waltzed part being a modified *Weller*, that is to say, the dignified German *Führung* mentioned before.

(example A, opposite page)

I have published a collection of such dances in the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Oesterreich* (XXVIII), from which I will cite another example.

In February, 1670, Draghi's opera *Baldreacca* was performed in Vienna. The subject, a very solemn one, was an incident in the life of the German emperor Otto I. In order to relieve the serious mood, and to give a lighter touch, a grotesque dance of the serving-maids was introduced. The "Ballet of the Maids" followed a scene between the traditional comic characters of Italian comedy, Lumio and Delfira, and was danced to the strains of the "Aria" here shown. It was a genuine Alpine dance, and there is not the least doubt that this is a *Schüplatter*, danced to the rhythm of the heels tapping the floor.

(example B, opposite page)

The melody gives a vivid picture of the maids trying to sweep the frightened clowns from the stage with their brooms, brandishing them in a kind of broom-sword dance. In the next scene, the Swabian peasants appear, and their figures show them to be less vehement. There is no stamping of heels, no tapping,—merely the movements of a mild and gentle *Weller*, a real waltz. The music leaves us in no doubt about it.

(example C, opposite page)

Johann Heinrich Schmelzer, the composer of these dances, was an interesting and highly gifted musician, whose masses, operas, instrumental works and violin sonatas are of great importance. That he was also a man who loved good living we may infer from

his last will and testament, which I have published. Besides a large collection of musical manuscripts, he left a fine cellar of the best Austrian and Hungarian wines, which he had prized highly. He carried on a spirited correspondence with the Prince-Bishop, Duke of Lichtenstein, in Olmutz, to whom he sent regular reports of the festivities at court, and not a little gossip as well. Once he sent him a case of "Fashing Crullers," baked in the Imperial kitchen for an opera performance. I mention this only to characterize the better the "Father of the *Ländler*," or, as I have called him, the "Johann Strauss of the Baroque Period." It is curious to note here, that so long as the Italian influence prevailed in the Vienna Ballet, the Alpine popular dances continued to flourish on the stage and in the ball room; but as French influence increased, the popular dances gradually disappeared from the ballets. There is one singular exception to this statement: Nicolas Matteis continued to write music for these ballets of the opera, in particular for those of Johan Joseph Fux and Antonio Caldara, during the first quarter of the 18th century.

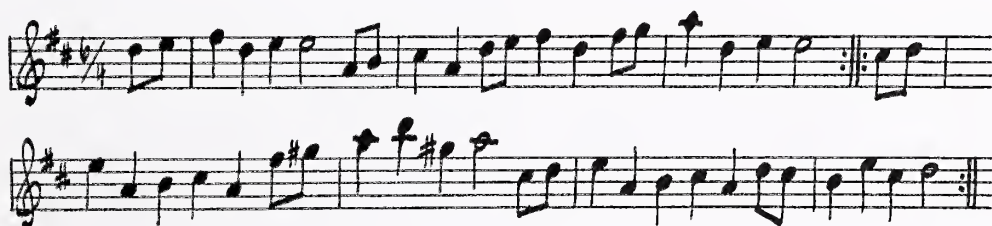
But the *Weller* did not disappear altogether, even under Charles VI, when the Austrian Court vied with that of Louis XV in political, social and cultural matters, and the French ballet-master Phillibois reigned over parquet and ballet. While affected menuets were executed in the French manner, and ladies were courted in finely chiseled French parlance, *Wellers* and *Ländlers* (it is under these names that they appear in the manuscripts of the early 18th century) were relegated to the Vienna suburbs and the country, whence they had come. The *Ländler* was tapped, never waltzed in 2/8, 2/4 or even 3/8 meter, and the *Weller* was waltzed to a 3/8 or 3/4 gliding time. The word *Ländler* is derived from *Ländel*, signifying Upper Austria and the adjoining Steiermark. Nowhere do we meet with the word *Walzer* in the 17th century. Folk dances of this



example A



example B



example C



Menuet. Engraving by Vanhaeck from Tomlinson's "The French Art of Dancing." 1735.

period were termed *Arie* in the manuscripts; sometimes *Arie Styriache*, but more often *Arie Viennesi*. The name *Walzer* appears for the first time about the middle of the 18th century. In colloquial German, *walzen* means *strolchen* (tramping), but can also signify *schleifen* (sliding or gliding), as contrasted with *treten* (stamping) or *springen* (jumping).

In 1760 waltz dances were prohibited. The bishops of Wurzburg and Fulda issued a decree forbidding all gliding and waltzing. But the Waltz had become so popular that in 1765 young Goethe, then a student at Strassburg, felt obliged to learn it, for without a knowledge of this dance, it was impossible to enter the highest social circles. In his famous novel "*Die Leiden des jungen Werther*," he describes how Werther and his

Lotte came to dance together, and "rolled about like the spheres" (*sie rollten herum wie die Sphaeren um einander*). As both of their partners danced badly, Lotte gladly consented to waltz the *Deutschen* with Werther. And now "it worked, and we delighted in many and diverse swinging of arms," relates Goethe. We must not forget that at this stage, the movements of the hands and arms were of the utmost importance in this dance. It is significant that eighteenth century writers, in describing the new *Allemande* or *Deutschen*, regard not the steps, but the action of the arms, as the characteristic feature. The crossing of arms would indicate that these dances, being still of the people and not yet introduced into the contredance, were more or less like the clog-dance, accompanied by a rhythmic hand-clapping. This attitude of the arms, and the *mannigfaltigen Schwingungen* of which Goethe speaks, were coming to be a choreographic convention.

It is not without intent that I have stressed Goethe and his experiences, for the Rhineland, particularly Alsace, was the portal through which the *Deutschen* and the *Allemande* entered Paris, where the *Strasbourg-geoise* and *Alsacienne* had become the favorite Parisian dances. La Borde recorded a *Danse de Strasbourg* in 2/8 time, as it was danced in Frankfort in 1770; Mozart, too, in one of his letters, speaks of the *Strasburger*, which he evidently used in one of his violin concertos (Koechel 218) and which resembles the *Ballo Straburghese* introduced in Dittersdorf's "Carnaval Symphony." A close examination of the frontispiece, in which the dancers are shown performing the *Menuet de Strasbourg*, reveals a striking disparity between its rural character, and that of the solemnly moving minuets of Lully and his contemporaries. There is no doubt that this dance, originally played and danced in the Rhineland, was a *ländler*-like folk dance, carefully dressed up for court presentation in

Paris. In Austria, at this same time, the Viennese delighted in seeing their arch-dukes and princesses dance the *Weller* or *Ländler*.

Goethe's enthusiasm for the gyrations of the waltz, as expressed in his famous novel and in his no less famous "*Hochzeitslied*"* (Wedding Song), was by no means shared by all his contemporaries.

Sir John Dean Paul, who gives a description, together with sketches, of the waltzes he had seen danced at the Tivoli in Paris in 1802, is of quite a different opinion. "The dance which we saw is a most curious one; it is called a *valse*. About two hundred couples take part in it to the accompaniment of very slow music. Unfortunately, my drawings can give but a feeble idea of it; the postures of the women were agreeable and alluring, to say the least; as to the men, the less said about them, the better; they were so dirty and vulgar as to be disgusting." It is not easy to see from the drawings why the author was so shocked and outraged. The motions, it is true, are of a whirling nature, and the movements of hands and arms wide and flinging, but I, personally, cannot find them in any way indecent. The opinions both for and against the waltz are so manifold that it is impossible to cite more than a few here.

A slightly different, but no less vehement impression was recorded by the Irishman Michael Kelly, who was an intimate friend of Mozart, and had been engaged to sing at the Vienna Opera in 1783. In his

*HOCHZEITSLIED:

*So rennt alles in vollem Galopp,
Und kuert sich im Saale ein Platzchen
Zum Drehen und Walzen und lustigem Hopp
Erkiesst sich ein jeder ein Schaetzchen.*

In a rush to the hall they galop
Of a place therein to be sure,
And by waltzing, in a swing and a hop,
A sweetheart hope to secure.



La Valse des Amans. French lithograph. ca. 1840

"Reminiscences" (London, 1826), he recalls this period: "The people of Vienna, were, in my time, dancing-mad; as the carnival approached, gaiety began to display itself on all sides, and when it really came nothing could exceed its brilliancy. The propensity of Vienna ladies for dancing and going to carnival masquerades was so determined that nothing was permitted to interfere with their enjoyment of their favorite amusement. nay, so notorious was it, that, for the sake of the ladies in the family way, who could not be persuaded to stay at home, there were apartments prepared with easy convenience for their accouchement, should they unfortunately be required, and I have been gravely told, and almost believe, that there have actually been instances of the utility of the arrangement. The ladies of Vienna are particularly celebrated for their grace and movements in dancing, of which they never tire. For my own part, I thought waltz-



La Valse (1801) and La Sauteuse (1806). From *Le Bon Genre*.

ing from ten at night until seven in the morning, was a continual whirligig, most tiresome to the ear and the eye, to say nothing of any worse consequences."

I have quoted this passage because it represents the view of a man of English culture, who was present during the glorious days of classical music in Vienna for which he had "praise without stint or measure," but who showed little taste for the charms of the waltz. The waltz did not reach England until about 1790, and the literary voices raised against it far outnumbered the few pamphlet articles in its favor.

A few words now about the first use of the term *Walzer*. The question has often been discussed but without any results. The mention of it in Gretry's "*Airs pour danser*" (1784) is relatively late. I found the first mention of the word *Walzer* in the comedy of the famous Viennese clown, theatre-director and dramatist, Felix Kurz, called "Bernardon," which is entitled "The Newly Revived and Inspired Bernardon" (around 1754). The word *Walzer* is sung in a genuine waltz-song, when the clown enters singing and dancing:

*Bald singen, bald springen,
Bald saufen, bald ranzen,
Bald spielen, bald tanzen,
Bald walzen umadum,
Mit heissa, Rum, Rum.*

And the Waltz begins thus:

It may be assumed that the composer of this waltz was Joseph Haydn, who, at that time, frequently wrote the music for Kurz's comedies. All this goes to prove that the waltz and waltz-music stem from the Alpine folk music and dances.

Manuscripts of the 17th century show that these dances often move in the order of the natural scale, i.e. in triads, octaves and sixths. They are derived from the *Jodler* or from natural wind instruments. The *Jodler* can be found in all mountainous regions, in the Alps as well as in the American mountains, and may be said to be the typical mode of musical expression of the mountaineer. This fact would substantiate the observation made by some musicologists, that young, vigorous and muscular peoples make wide strides and movements in contrast to those of weaker, more effeminate peoples of older cultures. The *Ländler*, therefore, and the *Weller*, the early forms of the Waltz are executed with impetuous movements, wide, high jumps and vehement sliding—musically corresponding to the tonal steps of the natural scale. This melodic peculiarity is noticeable in the *Ländler*s by Lanner and in Johann Strauss' waltzes, and that in a time when folk dances were cultivated and highly elaborate. Broken triads and wide intervals characterize the classic waltzes, such as Weber's "Invitation to the Dance" and the "Blue Danube" and, earlier, the "Ländler Overture" to Bach's "Peasant Cantata."





The Ball. Engraving after Augustin de Saint-Aubin. 1773.

The influence of those old *Ländler* melodies can be detected in the *Menuets* of Stamitz, Monn, Haydn and Mozart, to say nothing of Schubert's *Deutsche, Ländler* and *Walzer*.

There is a close connection between the range of the melodic steps and the accenting of the first beat of a measure. The rhythm of the Baroque dance is spread over the entire measure, where the rhythmic élan, so essential to the modern dance is lacking. The vigorous peasant dancer, following an instinctive knowledge of the weight of fall, utilizes his surplus energy to press all his strength into the proper beat of the measure, thus intensifying his personal enjoyment in dancing.

This development corresponds with the development of the music of the 17th century which passed from a polyphonic to a

homophonic style and was in contrast to the older linear conception, inasmuch as it resulted in a harmonic up and down, by means of the sequence of dissonance and consonance. And so the *Weller* and the *Waltz* were dances conformant to this musical concept. In time, the exaggerated accentuation of the first beat brought about an antipathy to that one-sided, rustic stamp-rhythm. This resulted in a slight shift of the accent to the second beat, corresponding to the psychological and physiological tendency to increase the suspense, causing a heightened sensation of pleasure.

The foregoing statements seem to prove conclusively that the story of the waltz being danced for the first time as late as in 1786 (at the performance of Martin's "Una Cosa Rara"), is fiction. There never was such a thing as a "first time" for the waltz. This

"child of the people" penetrated the polite circles gradually and surreptitiously, conquering the salons of Paris, London and New York under an assumed name. For 150 years it had led a hidden life at the Viennese Court, and was just the dance longed for by a new society, a society permeated with the spirit of the French and American Revolutions. People had grown tired of the stilted menuets, the sprawling *gavottes*, the stiff *chaconnes* and *passacaglias* of the French School. The mannered play of finger-tips, the affected courtesies, the tender but insincere glances, were forced to give way to a hearty grasp, a wholesome vitality, a saner eroticism—in short, to a new and natural movement that had set in, and the waltz came to be a form of expression of the "Third Class."

Mozart has established this sociological status of the waltz in the ballroom scene of his "Don Giovanni." Three orchestras play in this scene. The first plays the famous, dignified menuet, full of *grandezza*, to which the aristocratic Ottavio and Donna Anna dance; a second orchestra mingles with the strains of the menuet, playing a contre-dance in 2/4 time, which accompanies the dancing of Don Giovanni and Zerlina. Since the high-born seducer cannot draw the peasant girl into his own sphere he introduces her into the bourgeois circle, which is represented by the democratic contre-dance, a dance lately imported from England. Don Giovanni is familiar with the psychology of the girl; there could be no question of the menuet for her; she would not know how to dance it, and would only feel slighted and ridiculous were he to offer it to her. But, as a member of the "Third Class," Zerlina would feel herself flattered to be raised into the "Second Class." Finally a third orchestra tunes in, to which Masetto and Leporello dance the *Deutschen*. It is interesting to note how these dances observe an historical sequence; the two men of the servant class symbolize the democratic principle, for in the waltz everyone can



BEAUPRÉ, rôle de PRÉVOT DU M^{re} DE DANSE
de la Danseomanie

Ballet pantomime

Beaupré as the Dancing Master in Gardel's ballet *La Danseomanie*, produced at the Théâtre des Arts (Paris Opera) 1800. This performance marked the first appearance of the Waltz at the Paris Opera.

choose with whom he wishes to *walzen*. A man can even *walzen* with another man.

What a change from the *Wirtschaften* of the Baroque period where the costumes were decreed by the *Ober Hofmeister* (the Master of Ceremonies), and the dance had to be executed according to strict regulations from above. Here we have a new and liberal philosophy of mankind where freedom in the choice of a partner, and freedom of movement go hand in hand with the "Freedom of the Will." How inhibited the strictly measured movements of the baroque dance

must have seemed! We have only to observe a conductor directing these old dances. His motions came from the wrist only: he would have denaturalized the dances of Lully, Muffat, Rosenmueller or Biber, had he used his whole arm, as is of course called for, when conducting Stamitz, Haydn or Mozart.

The Waltz has done away with all courtly restriction. There are no regulations: each man turns around his own axis and he can dance the round of the hall. This is the image of microcosm and macrocosm: the sort of life where the individual feels himself a part



Peasants dancing. French lithograph. ca. 1800.



La Walse. ca. 1815.

of a great whole: of the universe. This, to me, seems to be the philosophy of the Waltz of the late 18th century. It is a philosophy which denies all exclusive authority and gives higher significance to the individual will. The cosmic principle in the double movement has been touched upon by Goethe in his *Werther*, when he says: "spheres rolling about in the universe." Personality in the universal, and a higher individual life in the frame-work of society would be, philosophically considered, the meaning of the Waltz—inspiration of all great composers, from Mozart to Brahms—whose longevity has surpassed that of all other dances.

Since the 17th century, dances have frequently been composed in series, or suites. Even in the Middle Ages people were not content with single dances, and preferred

them in serial form. The *gourmand raffiné* declined the one-course meal; his appetite demanded several courses, and he wished them *garnis*. Two courses, the *hors d'oeuvres* and dessert, find their parallels in musical terminology in the Introduction and Coda. *Menuets*, *Deutschen* or *Contre-Dances* were ordered in sets. Mozart himself composed six *Deutschen* in series, and other composers wrote waltz chains. One of the best of these, Friedrich Heinrich Himmel (1765-1814), a friend of Goethe, and famous for his propensities for good living, raised the six-part waltz to a type twenty years before Lanner and Johann Strauss. Another important figure in the history of music was Michael Pamer, who composed waltzes at the time of the Congress of Vienna. His best known works were the "Linzer Dances," in which

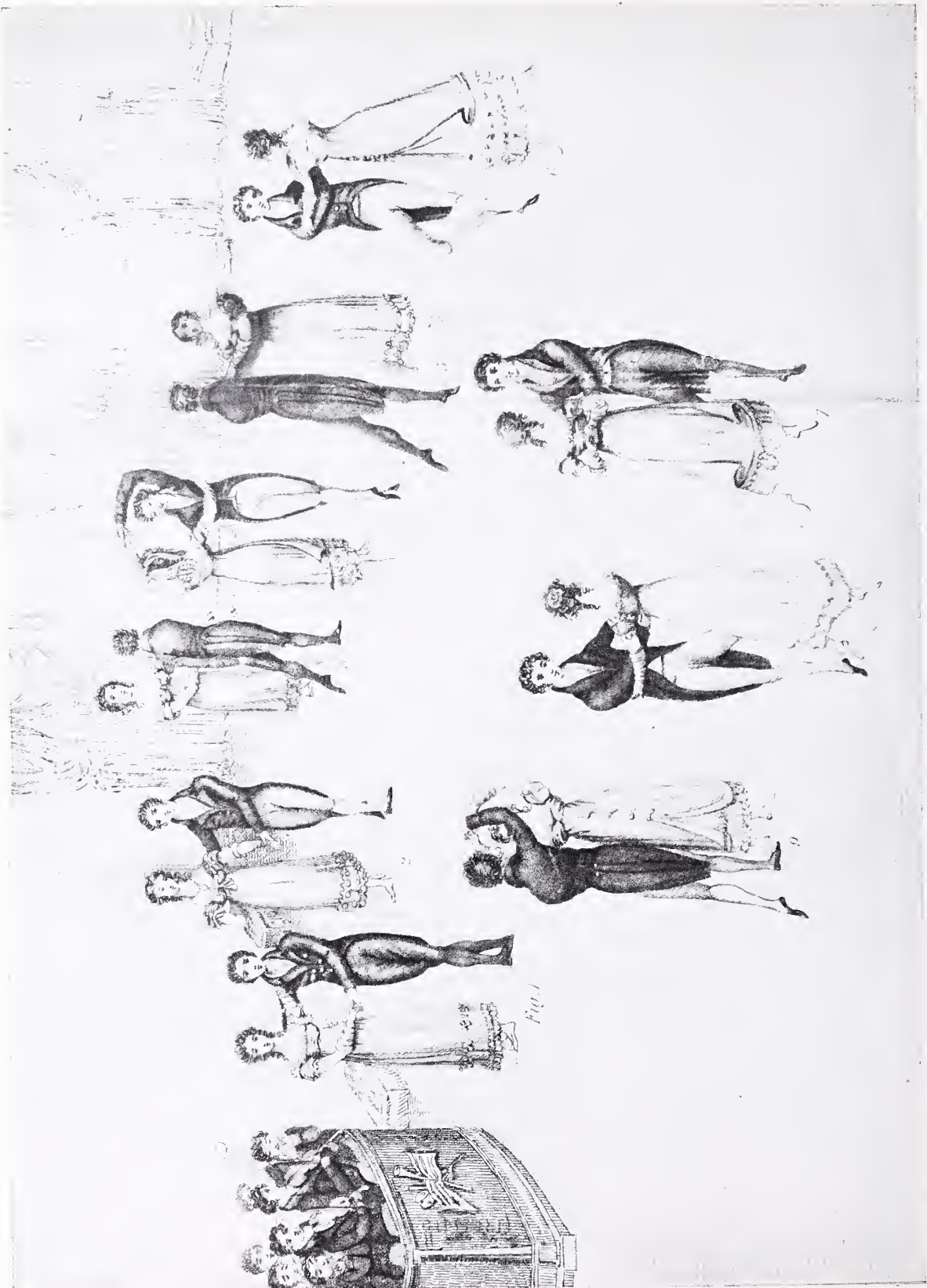


Fig. 1

WALTZ BALL.

MR. WILSON,
Dancing-Master,

FROM THE KING'S THEATRE, OPERA HOUSE,

AUTHOR OF THE

Analysis of Country Dancing,
TREASURES OF TERPSICHORE,
&c. &c.

Has the Honor of informing the Nobility, Gentry, his Pupils, and the Public, that he intends giving a WALTZ BALL, at the CROWN and ANCHOR TAVERN, STRAND, on TUESDAY, MAY 30, 1815--The Ball will be opened at NINE O'CLOCK.

FRENCH WALTZING

Will be generally danced; and in the course of the Evening Mr. WILSON and his Pupils will dance a Variety of Figured Waltzes, the much admired

French Dances,

"The Batense," "The Boulangere," &c. and "The Chant Russe," a New Dance, composed by Mrs. WILSON, will be danced by a young Lady, her Pupil.

For the greater Amusement of the Ladies and Gentlemen who may decline Waltzing. English Country Dancing and Reels will occasionally be introduced, and the Ball will conclude with an entire New General Dance, composed by Mr. WILSON, entitled "Le Rondeau."

Supper Rooms will be thrown open at One o'Clock; Tea and Coffee at Four.
Double Tickets, 15s.; Single Tickets, 10s. 6d. each.

TO BE HAD OF

MR. WILSON, AT HIS RESIDENCE AND ACADEMY,
2, GREVILLE STREET, HATTON GARDEN.

N.B. Such Ladies and Gentlemen as intend Waltzing are respectfully informed, that every WEDNESDAY EVENING previous to the Ball is appropriated to their Practice.

Mr. WILSON's Academy is always open, and Instructions given, in the most Private Manner, by Mr. or Mrs. WILSON, in Waltzing and every other Department of Dancing; and where may be had his several Works on Dancing already published; and a Prospectus and Terms of Subscription to several New Works now in Preparation for the Press.

Opposite: Reference Plate from Part I, German and French Waltzing, of "A Description of the Correct Method of Waltzing, the Truly Fashionable Species of Dancing . . ." by Thomas Wilson, Dancing-Master. London. 1816. Among the subscribers for this edition are listed the names of A. Vestris, C. Vestris, J. Bologna and Grimaldi.

Above: Public announcement from Thomas Wilson. 1815.



Illustration from "Life in London" by Pierre Egan. 1821 Edition. Drawn and engraved by Robert and George Cruikshank.



La Valse French lithograph. ca. 1830.

the introductory movement was a flourish of trumpets, intended to rally the dancers, as in the *Intrada* of the 17th century. Schubert, too, had made use of a simple introduction, and in 1819, Weber attached great importance to the Introduction in his "Invitation to the Dance." From the time Mozart added a closing movement to some of his German dances (Koechel 571) the Coda was in full swing. This coda was supposed to be a summary of the themes of the preceding dances, and indicated, as in the *Retirada* of old, that the time had come to lead the ladies back to their places and say farewell. But as time went on composers were inclined to give a deeper meaning to the Introduction and Coda. Introductions were written in a 4/4 march measure, or in a combination of 4/4 and 3/4 or 6/8 time. The main themes of the waltz were recapitulated, and a coquettish play with the Wagnerian *leit motif* idea

Carlotta Grisi and Lucien Petipa in the *Valse Favorite de Giselle*. Paris. 1841.



The *Waltze à Deux Temps*, from "The Drawing Room Dances," by Cellarius. London. 1847.

was even attempted, in a light and superficial manner.

There was a definite predilection for miniature waltz-poems, and a tendency to appeal to the romantic and sentimental, even to treat erotic intrigue in musical form. In the Coda, fragments of melodies, often distorted by variations and combinations, are heard as though in a beautiful dream. The *Walzer Traum* was the ideal of Viennese youth. The historian Reihl had already referred to Weber's "Invitation to the Dance" as a tone picture into which the "pathos of love" was introduced, and now Johann Strauss formally, if not boldly, embraced the conception of program music as furthered by Berlioz and Liszt. He did not strive, however, for the literal portrayal of scenes and events so much as for the suggestion of



La Valse à Mabilille. ca. 1870.

moods, and the vague intimation of matters outside the realm of music. Gradually, from the pianissimo tremolos in 6/8 ascending broken triads—the tone symbols of the Blue Danube—the primal motif of the water rises, and only when the listener has been lulled into a mood of tenderness does the 3/4 rhythm of the waltz set in, its phases announcing themselves softly at first, then rising gradually to an energetic fortissimo. Strauss is more explicit in some of his waltzes. In the “Morning News” he intends to imitate the ticking of the Morse apparatus; in “*Freut Euch des Lebens*” he suggests an Austrian village idyl; and in “*Geschichten aus dem Wiener Wald*” he conjures up a Viennese

landscape with its sweet, vinous and amorous mood. These programmatic tendencies, harmless as they seem from the standpoint of music, are significant in the development of the waltz. We must not forget that all dances, particularly those of the more virile and imaginative races, were pantomimic by nature. Musicologists and anthropologists have stressed the fact that wide-step dances, dance music having wide intervals, and pantomimic representations are all on the same plane. It almost seems as though the waltzes of Johann Strauss, Weber’s “Invitation to the Dance” and Schubert’s imaginative dances recall from afar these old ideas. But strangely enough, it is in just this pantomimic

aspect of the waltz that the beginning of its degeneration lies.

Of the waltz which Strauss dedicated to Brahms, "*Seid Umsehungen, Millionen*," Opus 443. Oscar Bie wrote "...we are seriously alarmed. The sweetness is distilled, the charin has a touch of decay, the porcelain is chipped." And in truth, when the waltz had reached its peak, its decadence was already evident. It shared the fate of all dances which stemmed from the lower stratum of a people, and were later appropriated by society. As the primitive melodies of the waltz ran into decay, beset by sentimentality on one side and intellectualization on the other, so the dance itself deteriorated.

In the last half of the 19th century, society began to analyze its erotic feelings, anticipating the teachings of Freud. This inclination derived stimulus from the sound of Strauss' music, and a society grown morally decadent through scepticism, uncertainty and insecurity, continued to dance, as on a burning volcano, to the music of its waltz king and his followers: Eduard Strauss, Lehar, Oscar Strauss, Eisler and others. Austrian literature of the nineties, represented by Schnitzler, Hoffmannsthal and Zweig, reflects this corrupt, speculative, self-satirizing society, and indicates that its members were well aware of their approaching downfall. It is characteristic that the original lyric of the "Blue Danube," first performed February 15, 1867, a year after the Prussian victory over Austria, contained the following lines:

*Wiener, seid froh!
Oho, wie so?
Ein Schimmer des Lichts?
Wir sehn naeh nichts.*

Viennese be gay!
Oho, how so?
Of light a ray
We nothing know.

They were not taken too seriously, but the scepticism of the Viennese had already found expression in this silly text.

The fresh, lively, vital *Weller* and *Ländler*, with their sane sensuality, had lost their identity in the elegant, sentimental waltz. Gradually it, too lost its power of attraction. Its exhibitionistic, Narcissus-like elements persist in the slow "Boston," but this dance, like other successors of the waltz, has drawn sustenance from the life-forces of the Western Hemisphere.



American music cover, 1914.

W A L T Z.

MUSE of the many-twinkling feet*!—whose charms
Are now extended up from legs to arms ;
Terpsichore!—too long misdeemed a maid—
Reproachful term—bestowed but to upbraid—
Henceforth in all the bronze of brightness shine,
The least a vestal of the virgin Nine.
Far be from thee and thine the name of Prude ;
Mocked, yet triumphant, sneered at unsubdued,
Thy legs must move to conquer as they fly,
If but thy coats are reasonably high ;

* " Glance their many-twinkling feet."—GRAY.

"The Waltz. An Apostrophic Hymn. By Horace Hornem, esq."
(Lord Byron) London. 1813. Reproduced from a copy in the
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